

11 APR 1949

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TOP SECRET

GENERAL

1. Satellite purges believed Soviet encirclement of Yugoslavia--
US Ambassador Cannon in Belgrade, in pointing out the similarities in the purges of top Communist leaders in Albania, Greece, and most recently in Bulgaria, comments that the Kremlin apparently intends to establish, without regard for personal merit or popular following, a corps of loyal Moscow-trained satraps throughout the Balkans. Cannon believes that the Kremlin is determined to seal Tito off geographically and to turn Yugoslav propaganda for a united Macedonia against him by demonstrating the hostility of Yugoslavia's neighbors. Cannon considers that it should be made clear to the Kremlin that the US does not consider the Macedonian question to be merely an inter-orbit squabble over the disposition of remote territory by three Soviet Satellites. He recommends that the US impress upon the USSR that any overt or camouflaged aggression in Macedonia cannot succeed through the indifference of the world.

(CIA Comment: CIA agrees that the current purge of Balkan Communist leaders is motivated partially by a desire to isolate Tito. In a broader sense, though, the Soviet action reflects the current effort by the USSR to consolidate its hold on the Satellites.)

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Auth: DCI 10 77/1733
Date: 20 MAR 1978 By: 024

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NO. 028